

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. SCHIFF) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. SCHIFF addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

TRUTH ABOUT IRAQ

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. INSLEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. INSLEE. Madam Speaker, I heard a very disturbing report today. While we are engaging in a very important and legitimate debate about our strategy in Iraq, one thing for sure we ought to be united on, and that is Americans ought to have access to the truth and not to be the subject of spin by their own government and should not have their own government suppressing the truth about Iraq. Things are difficult enough about Iraq without the Federal Government suppressing the truth about Iraq.

Unfortunately, that appears to be what is going on in this administration. Today in the Washington Post an article related that the USAID ordered the restriction of preventing distribution of reports by the contractor Kroll Security International which had previously shown that the number of daily attacks by insurgents in Iraq had increased significantly. In response to the news that these insurgent attacks are increasing, about 5 weeks before this election, this administration decided apparently to suppress that information and the agency ordered that this information no longer be disseminated to the American public.

This is information generated with U.S. American taxpayer dollars that this administration, 5 weeks before the election, does not want the American people to hear about.

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The article in The Washington Post says: "The Kroll reports suggest a broad and intensifying campaign of insurgent violence." In response to that bad news, the agency official at USAID sent an e-mail to congressional aides stating, "This is the last Kroll report to come in. After The Washington Post story, they shut it down in order to regroup. I'll let you know when it restarts."

There is no excuse for this administration shielding information about Iraq and the fact that we have great difficulties there from the American people. We have a legitimate right to know this information. We have an important debate in our national body politic to figure out the right strategy in Iraq, and it is wrong to suppress this information.

We cannot decide the right decision in Iraq by looking through rose-colored glasses anymore. Hope is not a strategy. Simply saying we are going to have the same old, same old in Iraq and

shield and hide the ball from the American people just will not cut it. Tonight it would be nice if the administration and the President admitted that we have some difficulties in Iraq and admitted we need to make some changes in strategy or we are going to have deep trouble.

But this is not the only symptom of an administration that is refusing to face reality in Iraq. In that same story in The Washington Post, I read that Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld's office is now sponsoring a sort of happy talk, good news tour through our bases and that we are using taxpayers' money to bring Iraqis to spread the good news of Iraq to our military bases here in this country. The memo disclosing this tour paid for by taxpayer dollars says it is "designed to be uplifting accounts with good news messages." Rumsfeld's office, which will pay for the tour, recommends that the installations seek local news coverage, noting that "these events and presentations are positive public relations opportunities." We do not need a public relations campaign. We need a campaign for success in bringing our troops home in Iraq. We are not getting that from this administration.

The memo went on to suggest that the commanders at each base "are in the best position on how to market this voluntary attendance program effectively." We do not need a marketing campaign. We need an honest discussion of how to get a strategy to bring our troops home after success. But that is not what we are getting from this administration. Instead of recognizing and coming clean with the American people about their failures to find weapons of mass destruction, their failures to tell the accurate situation about connections with al Qaeda, their failures to have enough troops on the ground, their failures to have enough body armor, they have given us a marketing technique protocol paid for with taxpayer dollars. It is wrong. We need a strategy, not a marketing campaign.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. MILLER of Michigan). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. RYAN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. RYAN addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. NORTON addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

9/11 COMMISSION LEGISLATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, we have spent a number of hours on the floor of the House discussing issues that hold a great deal of emotion for many people around this Nation. With that said, I offer my respect for the different views that were expressed on the floor of the House, driven with emotion and passion, driven by your personal faith, and others as myself driven by the sanctity of our Constitution and the desire to preserve this Union.

It is interesting that the Republican majority would offer this debate at this time. There is no doubt that voices of the American people must be heard. But at the same time, an enormous responsibility of ensuring the safety and the protection of the American people by passing the 9/11 Commission recommendations through the Collins-Lieberman-McCain bill along with the House provision of the Shays-Maloney bill goes unattended. So what we have is a mishmash of provisions that have really nothing to do with the security of this Nation.

When we found that the CIA had, in fact, provided intelligence to this administration that if we went to war the insurgent aftermath, the efforts of the insurgents, the violence that would be perpetrated after any battle or war would be claimed over would be almost insurmountable. Yet because of the meshing of those disciplines, if you will, the complete glove-and-hand relationship between the CIA director, apparently that intelligence was ignored, and maybe because the CIA director failed to understand that his allegiance was really to the American people and not, in fact, to a single head of government.

The American people should have known that this intelligence ultimately was going to undermine any victory that was given or had by our brave men and women who were on the front lines for us, Reservists, National Guard, enlisted personnel, already doomed because of the fact that intelligence said that it was the insurgent action that was going to undermine peace and security and freedom in Iraq.

And lo and behold, here we are today with an insurgent movement, a terrorist movement that has overtaken Baghdad and Iraq. Yet this administration has no policy, has no exit strategy, has no relief, not only for the Iraqi people but for the American people. And while Baghdad is burning, we are refusing to take up the 9/11 Commission report.

All day yesterday in the Committee on the Judiciary, all we had was extraneous law enforcement matters that could be defended and could be promoted and argued and promoted at another time, extraneous immigration policies that had no place in a bill that is dealing with the safety and security of the United States of America, the immediacy of the 9/11 report.